

Share the Memories



Reminiscences of alumni of
Concordia University, Sir George Williams
University and Loyola College

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In September 1974, a new institution opened its doors in Montreal: Concordia University. But Concordia, of course, wasn't really new, because it was formed by the merger of two venerable schools, Sir George Williams University and Loyola College, each with long and esteemed traditions.

Throughout 1999-2000, as part of Concordia's 25th anniversary celebrations, alumni were invited to submit brief essays reminiscing about their days at Loyola, Sir George or Concordia. We received a good number of responses, some short, others more lengthy, many funny or poignant, but all with a nostalgia and fondness for the people and events which helped make the alumni's experiences at the three institutions truly memorable.

Here are those essays, slightly edited, in order of the year of graduation. They will also be made available to view online, on a rotating basis, at:

<http://alumni.concordia.ca/sharethememories/>

Enjoy.

May 2001



Concordia
UNIVERSITY

As first president of the Faculty Club, with Mag Flynn as VP, we nearly went to jail. The curtains in the club were not fire-proofed. (Our fingerprints are on record.)

After a time at the Collège Militaire Royal de St-Jean I joined the small and intimate math department in 1961.

As first chairman of the University Council on Student Life, we had an emergency — the Quebec government cut off all funding of student services. At a weekend meeting with administrators, faculty, student leaders and Alec Duff of the board of governors, the problem was resolved.

In 1967 I received two honours — I was named an honorary member of the Garnet Key Society and Honorary President of the Student Association by Donald Luciano. Also, I coached the Chinese Georgians in hockey — we managed to win one game.

We had fun in the Faculty Club singing our heads off, with Norm Smith playing the piano; Jim Whitelaw reciting Bobby Burns with a dagger poised above the haggis; and Sissy and Vernon, our bar stewards, helping me into a Santa Claus suit. I hope no one will forget a very good friend of the University, namely Reggie. Everyone from Rob Rae (principal) to John O'Brien enjoyed the Long Service Awards Banquet at the Ritz-Carlton Hotel.

On a happy note, as a widower I met my present wife, Irene Storen, a widow, who was the "den mother" for the engineers, in the Faculty Club with her daughter Judy, who at the time was the director of exams. We were married in 1973 and are still happily together.

Frank Stannard, Sir George BSc 45 Gloucester, Ont.

I have many fond memories of my days at Sir George as a scholar. At the time, Gordon Donaldson was president of the alumni and I was VP. As head of the entertainment committee I arranged for dances during the year and of course the final graduation dinner. I had many conversations with Dean Hall concerning my choice of courses towards my BSc degree, and Doug Clarke as the registrar. I think fondly of the English teacher who thought I should get 100 percent for my term essay in her course and insisted on marking it accordingly. (Unfortunately, her name escapes me at the moment. Old age plays havoc with the memory.)

My wife remembers Professor Claude Thompson, who, at the final alumni dinner, gently advised her as she started to light a cigarette, "We usually take an after-dinner cigarette only after we have toasted the Queen."

Thomas F. Massiah, Sir George BSc 47
Agincourt, Ont.

An Unexpected Occurrence in the Old Sir George Chemistry Lab

I was carrying out a quantitative analysis to determine the percentage of sulphate in a soluble sulphate. The procedure required the ignition of precipitated barium sulphate, in an inclined, partly covered crucible, using a Meker burner. Unexpectedly, a huge fly flew directly into one of the two crucibles that I was using for the determinations, and was summarily incinerated. Since flies have an exoskeleton composed of chitin, I did not expect that the fly's residue in the crucible would adversely affect the determination. So I continued heating the crucible until it had reached a constant weight. Imagine my surprise when it turned out that the fly had a significant and substantial residue. This would compromise both the precision and accuracy of the determination. Therefore, the only recourse for me was to weigh out another sample, and repeat the determination.

I wonder if any of my lab mates, Ken Adams, Jim Dick (who went on to become professor of analytical chemistry at both SGWU and Concordia), or Maurice Ryant (who became dean of Algonquin College), recall this unexpected incident.

Today, "wet chemistry" is seldom done in analytical chemistry. And our methods were primitive compared to the sophisticated analytical tools available today. Despite this, we who were there rejoice that we were so well instructed (at Sir George), in the use of then-current analytical methodology.

Ross Burgess, Sir George BCom 50
Halifax

I left high school halfway through the 10th year (a bore) and went to work. I did, however, attend night classes at Sir George to complete the year. My 11th year was completed in the

same manner.

After serving as a pilot in the RCAF, I returned fulltime to Sir George for two years. After the money ran out it was necessary to work and take night classes for three years. I graduated in 1950 with a Bachelor of Commerce. In those days a course cost \$80 per year. Classrooms were located up and down Stanley Street.

I shall never forget Henry Hall and his course on natural science. He was a true gentleman. A lot is owed to Sir George, and looking back over my 75 years I would never have made a success without the help of so many dedicated people in the "college."

Gerry (Sam) McGee, Loyola BA 51
Ottawa

In anticipation of our 50th year anniversary reunion in 2001, I would like to share the memories of Professor Frank Guadagni.

Anyone who elected for the engineering program at Loyola in the mid-forties to well into the fifties and possibly the early sixties will also remember "Guadink" for his excellence as a teacher and that we were given the opportunity of small classes.

He was socially interactive with his students, inviting us to his home in Montreal West, where we could sit around informally and talk about whatever students and teachers talk about. In classes, he will be remembered for "shining his glass tie"!

His background in mining engineering made him skilled in helping us to visualize concepts, as necessary in three dimensions. He taught us how to draft well and present neat and correct surveying drawings.

I remember a personal experience in my final year at Loyola. Because of an extra burden of extracurricular activities, athletics, student council, etc., Professor Guadagni warned me that I was going near to the edge, academically.

Sure enough, in the final exams I failed mechanics — still enough to get my BA, but not enough to get into McGill and finish my engineering. He conned me through the summer in mechanics, and I wrote his exam and obtained 100 percent!

A great guy — Guadagni Lounge is named after him.

Stanley Matulis, Loyola BSc 54, and Hugh McQueen, Loyola BSc 54 Montreal

Start of the Faculty of Science, 1943-53

Loyola's Faculty of Science started courses in the fall of 1943, giving honours chemistry, mathematics and physics as well as pre-engineering programs in civil, mechanical, electrical, mining, metallurgical and engineering physics. Metallurgy was dropped after several years but restarted in 1962. The pre-engineering graduates, although the sheepskin said simply BSc, were ready to enter fourth-year engineering of McGill's five-year program. The entrance arrangements between the two institutions were unique, i.e., no qualifying exams were required. This "gentleman's agreement" was no doubt based on McGill's recognition of the high scholastic standards of the Jesuits, especially Dr. Hugh McPhee, S.J. (physics), and Dr. Eric O'Connor, S.J. (mathematics), who were the academic linchpins of the Science Faculty.

The campus paper *Loyola News* wrote up a minor heading in its September 29, 1947, issue:

News of Last Year's Loyola Grads:

Last year was an eventful one for Loyola since it produced its first graduating class in science.

Of this group, Messrs Danaher, Flanagan, Harvey, Fauteaux, Kennedy and Leahy entered the Faculty of Engineering at McGill. These "illustrious six" created a milestone at Loyola.

Shulamis Yelin, Sir George BA 57

Cote St. Luc, Que.

The College of the Second Chance

I became a teacher in 1932, at 19, with only one year of training at Macdonald College's school for teachers in Ste. Anne de Bellevue, Quebec. While I had dreamed of going to Columbia University to study journalism, the great depression of 1929 made this an impossible dream.

I was lucky to be one of the four Jewish girls (out of 44 candidates that year) to be placed with the Protestant School Board of Greater Montreal (PSBGM). I loved my work, yet after several years of teaching, I felt the need for further stimulation.

I requested an exchange to England. My request was granted and to my delight I was to be teaching at Bath, the ancient Roman city, the city of my beloved Chaucer and the place where John Bunyan, author of *Pilgrim's Progress*, had sat in jail.

I was to leave on September 6, but September 3, 1939, the Second World War broke out.

The Board had already hired a replacement. I decided to fulfil that long-cherished dream and applied and was accepted into Columbia University's Teacher's College, where I enjoyed a roster of various courses under distinguished scholars.

It was a decision that was to prove of great importance many years later.

The year over, I returned to the PSBGM and, shortly after, left again, this time to be married and raise a family.

When my little daughter was 2, I registered for a one-half course in creative writing at Sir George and completed it with an "A."

As life took over with family, friends and community involvement, I had neither time nor the desire for further courses. However, with my reputation firmly as an educator, I was invited to become assistant principal at a private school.

In 1954, the second year of this connection, tragedy struck my family. My husband experienced a freak accident which, over an extended number of years, would end his life. Now, as breadwinner for my family, I had to return to fulltime teaching at the PSBGM.

To upgrade my salary and status I returned for evening courses to Sir George Williams College.

With a young child at home and my husband slowly and sadly deteriorating, my older sister dying of cancer and no help at home, fulltime teaching was difficult. Added to that were the two courses I was taking each semester. This meant getting downtown twice a week for 6:30 p.m. and returning home at 11:00 p.m. Yet despite this difficulty, I was ever cognizant of the opportunity SGWC was giving me. Those courses towards my BA were my lifeline. Despite all the hardship life was dishing out I was connecting with a better tomorrow.

Yet I recall with pain the many times the pen fell from my hand by the middle of an evening of note taking. By the fourth year of this ever-heavier load, I found myself near breaking point. Professor Douglass Clarke, of Blessed Memory, became aware of my enormous tension as he corrected my English exam. He called me into his office.

"Mrs. Yelin," he said, "you are overtired. This is not the usual level of your work. I've learned from Professor Lerner [a mutual friend] the conditions under which you are doing this. Why not take a year out to ease up and then come back and complete your degree." His humanity moved me to tears. "I can't," I blurted out. "If I stop I'll never finish! I must get on with this and get it done. I need to get those remaining credits."

We sat for a few minutes in weighted silence while I tried to control my emotions. Suddenly he spoke. "What credits can we count now?" he asked. "I know you have a year — four credits — from Macdonald, where you acquitted yourself very well. You also have these three years. Can you think of any other courses you might have taken here or elsewhere?"

I recalled telling my high-school-student daughter when she questioned the need to take certain courses, "Nothing is wasted, a person has to have something to forget so he'll have something to recall when necessary. . . ."

Suddenly I recalled my "A" in Creative Writing, only half a credit. "Good," he said. "Anything else?"

"Well, I did attend Columbia University for a year in 1939."

"Really? Can you bring a transcript?"

Being the kind of person who never throws out any written or printed paper, I ran home to look and returned to greet my benefactor with my precious document.

"Wonderful!" he exclaimed with a warm smile. "This completes your requirements!" He extended his hand to embrace mine. I graduated in 1957.

As I walked in the procession wearing my black graduation cap and gown, I couldn't believe my good fortune. A Yiddish proverb kept racing through my mind:

To every stroke of bad luck
You need a dash of good luck.

I waited in suspended disbelief to receive my diploma. I, whose maiden name begun with a "B" (for Barodlusk), now had to wait for "Y" (for Yelin)! As my name was finally called and Dr. Hall (of Blessed Memory) handed me my document, I was aware of a flash — a former Northmount student had snapped our picture.

Among the gifts I received from family and friends was a cheque for \$25. I sent it to Dr. Hall with a note:

Dear Dr. Hall,

My heartfelt thanks and gratitude to you and to SGW College for giving me a Second Chance. For Sir George Williams College is indeed the *University of the Second Chance*.

How glad I am to be recalling with joy those difficult, worthwhile times!

Simson Najovits, Sir George BA (political science & literature) 59
Paris, France

In those days (1955-59), Sir George Williams didn't even have university status. It was a college which awarded a few hundred BA, BSc and BCom degrees every year. Nevertheless, it had some extraordinarily erudite and motivated professors. I remember many of them fondly, and especially the head of the English Literature Department, Neil Compton.

Neil Compton understood Shakespeare, James Joyce and many others, including rising Canadian writers like Mordecai Richler, better than most people I've met or studied with since. After being paralyzed by polio, he taught from a motorized wheelchair and used a special device so that his weak voice could be heard. Courage, knowledge and an interest in discovering young writers in his classes put him in a unique category. He died accidentally when his wheelchair tumbled over when an elevator didn't stop exactly at floor level. He convinced me that writing was the most important thing in life — and I believed him and guess that I still do.

Of course, I remember many things from my years at Sir George . . . but if I had to list them, Neil Compton, the not-so-easy struggle to transform the weekly newspaper *The Georgian* into an independent, free medium, many students who were the spice of Montreal, the Beatnik cafés on Stanley Street, and the Stanley Tavern top the list.

Carol (Goldenberg) Katz, Sir George BA (psychology & sociology) 62
Archivist, Montreal Holocaust Memorial Centre
Cote St. Luc, Que.

I graduated from Sir George Williams University in 1962. I won the psychology prize for having the highest marks. At the time I entered, it was a college. It achieved university status while I was still a student.

One of my favourite recollections is walking down the halls and having Dr. Henry Hall, principal, and Dean Rae address me by my first name. It was a smaller school and very warm. Another recollection is my being chosen for the Garnet Key Society and attending important functions. Also, lending other students my class notes so that they could pass the exams. We had fun studying together in each other's homes.

The four years I spent at Sir George Williams were among the happiest of my life. I loved the warm, friendly atmosphere. I also remember the small library in the chapel of the Drummond Building, and the librarian always telling us to stay quiet when we tried to have discussions about politics or religion. I also remember writing out my projects on index cards in the library. How did we function without photocopy machines?!

Beverly (Emms) Pidduck, Sir George BA 62 **Ottawa**

I was Beverly Emms when I registered as an evening student in September 1955. After completing my teaching diploma at Macdonald College, it was time to resume my education. It was across the street from the main building of Sir George Williams University — perhaps it was called the YMCA Building — right next to the HMCS Donnacona on Drummond Street.

I was checking the old grey houses for the right address. I opened the door and went up a rather dark stairway to the top floor. It was all plain, dark wood, and into a warm, cosy room just under the slanted roof where I sat down with my paints, pad of manila paper and about 15 students. There was Mrs. Leah B. Sherman standing at the front of the room with her warm, welcoming smile. She began to teach us about art for the elementary school classroom. We made her instructions come to life in our own "masterpieces." So many good ideas for art lessons, and I used them not only for my Beaurepaire and Beaconsfield School classes but with our own four children and their friends after that. Everyone was a budding artist.

Another year, my future husband joined me for Dr. Henry Hall's Natural Science 101, along with 250 other students who had come after work for an evening class. It was in a large hall in the "Y" building. Folding wooden chairs rattled and shifted noisily. But his class was so interesting. Projected slides were used sometimes. His fine character shone through everything he said.

I looked forward to my evening classes after a busy day teaching and feel indebted to Sir George Williams University for providing the opportunities for me to study and earn my Bachelor of Arts at the 25th anniversary ceremonies for Sir George Williams University in 1962, on a June evening three weeks before our daughter Celia was born. We already had an 18 month old son, Stephen. On my BA diploma I am Beverly Fairfield Pidduck. Signatures include: K. Norris, Chancellor; Douglass Burns Clarke, Registrar; Henry F. Hall, Principal & Vice-Chancellor; Robert C. Rae, Dean.

Walter L. Kozub, Loyola BA 64 Montreal

In my days at Loyola College, the records office was on the main floor on the right side of the grand doors that nobody used. The whole corridor was full of offices, and there was always typewriter noise.

On my way to pay for my grad ring, I stopped to look at the poster to admire my choice. I liked the el4k clunker for \$30. That was a lot of money, considering my dad was making \$75 a week as a master carpenter and the Canadian dollar was above the U.S. dollar some days.

As I stood there, I heard one of the secretaries cry out, "Oh no . . . God no . . . oh my God, my God. . ."

The secretary across the corridor asked what was wrong.

"Turn on the radio! Turn on the radio. Somebody just shot the president of the United States. Somebody just shot John F. Kennedy."

I didn't move, I didn't think, I just stood there.

I guess that the secretary brought the radio next to the intercom and pressed the general switch, because a little later the whole college heard the first on-the-spot reports from Dallas.

It was an autumn day in 1963.

Noel Ryan, Sir George BA 64
Mississauga, Ont.

One of the rewards of writing my memoirs was learning I have enjoyed quite a privileged life and there was a specific path for me to follow. I would like to acquaint you with a small portion of my destiny. A major privilege was the opportunity to earn a university degree in the evening classes at Sir George. The classes with Irving Layton led me to become a published poet and some recognition as a writer.

The following was written from a scene at Sir George.

Balanced Life

Slap, slap,
go the twisted feet;
irregular pendulums
swinging hard against
rain-slicked sidewalk.

Supporting braces
jangle like spurs
won learning to
balance life:
canes in one hand,
books in the other.

To follow my path, I needed a "B." But I didn't listen closely enough to get it right from the beginning. Returning from service overseas with the Black Watch, I studied engineering for two and a half years at McGill. Wrong path. In 1949, I took three management courses at the YMCA on Bishop. With the smell of the pool downstairs, and with no idea I was studying at a university, I didn't bother writing the exams at the end of the courses.

Doreen Allison from Toronto came to live in Montreal in 1950. Our paths crossed and we married. One day, 10 years and two children later, Doreen surprised me by enrolling at Sir George for a BA. I enrolled the next day. We both graduated.

My BA brought me to an MLS from McGill and a very successful career as chief librarian of a large Ontario library system. Later, Doreen would show me an ad in *Time* magazine which led me to an Executive MBA.

Thank you, Sir George.

Bob Owston, Sir George BA 66, and Marika Jaansoo-Owston, Sir George BA 66
Vancouver

Where I Was in '62

The fall of 1962 was memorable in the extreme because in Literature 221, offered in Birks Hall by Professor Bryant, I encountered a Goddess.

I would park my motorcycle along the building facade on Drummond Street after pushing it from the street across the broad sidewalk to a choice spot near the main entrance of the Norris Building. The Montreal police frowned on this practice and gave you a ticket if they caught you in the act. But I was a rebel and moreover there was a sight in Birks Hall that I had to position myself to witness, so caution meant little on these mornings.

She would arrive without exception and sit in the same area of that large hall. I knew where I had to sit to see every detail. Her steady attendance spoke volumes about her character. I was impressed by that and more. . . .

A chance to meet her arrived when fate placed us in a small-sized conference group for discussions. I shopped for a second-hand volume of Norse sagas because I suspected the Goddess was Scandinavian. In an act of bravery fuelled by my ardour I put my gambit into motion and immediately put my life on a new course. I attempted a self-introduction as our group was assembling for the afternoon's business. I offered a suitably engaging opinion on the topic of sagas and invited her response. I was very encouraged by her reaction. The attraction seemed mutual. The saga book was shortly put away as we had so much else to focus on.

We graduated in 1966 at the convocation held at Place des Arts. My Goddess and I have resided in Valhalla since our encounter at Birks Hall 38 years ago.

Murray Meyer, Sir George BA 67
Culver City, Calif.

Sunday night at the Film Society in the big hall right in front of the building was where I met my future wife. Every week we'd see another great classic. I attended those film events

much more than my classes. In fact, I think I used to go to those nights before I even went to Sir George.

But it was there that on a cold, snowy night a beautiful young woman sitting a few seats down from where I sat — the movie was *Jules et Jim* — spoke to me for the first time. She said she heard that I had my own apartment (which I did because, although only 17, my parents had returned to New York and left me in the basement apartment of a family friend in the Town of Mount Royal, Eckers Street, for a monthly rental of \$30) and would I be interested in a roommate? I said the place was too small but why don't we talk about it. After the film we went for coffee to the Pam Pam on Stanley Street, and there decided to go look for a larger apartment together. We spent a few fun-filled afternoons trying to find an apartment.

Doug Malliff, Loyola BSc (math) 68
Pembroke, Ont.

In 1968 my math professor, Joe Soric, suggested that I try teaching as a career. At first, I thought that he was crazy. But I just retired from a successful 32-year teaching career. I got a job on my first interview in Pembroke, got married, had two children and one granddaughter. Thank you, Mr. Soric.

I also remember our football team (I was also a player) having a lot of fun but not winning any games. Loyola is where I learned how to wrestle, and I also coached at the high school level, producing an Ontario and a Canadian champion. Now my former wrestlers have also produced All Ontario champions as coaches.

F. Lilian Kaplansky Zacharin, Sir George BA 69
Montreal

When I was 16 years old and still attending commercial high school, my father, who worked as a presser in a dress factory, had a heart attack. Upon graduation, my family would depend on my paycheque until my father recovered. College was now out of the question.

I went to the Federal Employment Bureau, where I met with an employment agent who happened to be the person whom I had introduced during Career Day at my high school. Lucky me! The job I craved was available — I would work in the offices of Sir George Williams College.

Office clerks were encouraged (by teachers like D.B. Clarke, H. Hall, R. Fraser, C. Thompson and bursar H. Worrall) to enrol in classes. It was free for all fulltime office help.

During the first two years I worked there I managed to complete first year college. I also renewed my friendship with the man who later become my husband. (While studying at Sir George for his BSc, he worked as the mail boy. He had come all the way from McGill to visit the office staff — and there I was!)

Inspired by the pleasure of learning, I enrolled in the one-year diploma course at Macdonald College, commuting from home in Montreal. After receiving this diploma I taught for close to 30 years. My first class was filled with children of Second World War veterans.

When working during registration for Sir George, I remember evening students complaining that they would grow old before they would get their degree. Dean Henry Hall would encourage them to not give up and enjoy the benefits, explaining that they would grow old anyway.

I started taking courses at 17 and completed my degree at 34. My experience at Sir George enhanced my life and for this I will always be grateful.

Al Vilcius, Loyola BSc (honours math) 70 Campbellville, Ont.

Many people at Loyola influenced me very deeply, but two in particular, the Rev. Eric O'Connor and Professor Jerome Sabat, both math professors, influenced me most profoundly.

Having entered Loyola in 1966 with the physics prize, it was Jerome Sabat, with his contagious energy and enthusiasm for math, who convinced me to choose mathematics instead of physics as my major. I did this with some trepidation because everyone was petrified of the Rev. O'Connor's second-year killer math course that separated out the honours students. It turned out that the course was truly fantastic: this brilliant man, himself a student of the great G.D. Birkhoff at Harvard and personally known to John von Neumann, opened for us the

Pandora's box of pure math to display an almost unspeakable beauty, which unfortunately remained hidden in plain sight to many of the other students. My work was rewarded with a 100 percent on the course, after filling six large exam books with non-stop furious writing during the three-hour final, but even that was not automatic since the mark was only given after a telephone interview following the exam.

Both the Rev. O'Connor and Professor Sabat were a pleasure to be around, both having unbounded generosity in giving insight and understanding in a kind and gentle way. Professor Sabat moved on to Trent University when it first opened, and I fear the Rev. O'Connor, who remained my most admired friend and mentor through grad school, has since passed away. Nevertheless, my memories of them are still very immediate and vibrant, manifest in my lifelong love of mathematics, and have some continuity with my son, Erik, who is now at Trent. I could go on and on, but I will stop here, with my eternal gratitude to Loyola.

**Mike McMenamin, Sir George BA (psychology) 71
Duncan, B.C.**

In September of 1967, Psychology 101 was an experience that impressed me. Seven hundred students in the amphitheatre and professor Stan Munoz entered the arcane world of psych experimentation. Stan Munoz was able to tell stories of his baseball career and connect them with the work of Henry David Thoreau, B.F. Skinner and Pavlov.

It provided me and my associates with a view of the world that included most of human endeavour. As a result of his influence during some troubled times, I was able to more clearly understand such phenomena as the Vietnam War, the student strike and consequent debacle on the ninth floor of the Hall Building, and events surrounding the October Crisis in 1970.

It was an amazing time to be a university student. The possibilities were endless. Trudeau was P.M. The memories of Expo 67 remained bright. The community of the Hall Building was inclusive and friendly.

Thanks, SGWU.

Catherine Molony Swann, Sir George BA 72
Chateauguay, Que.

I remember: Snoopies, a club for aspiring aviators. Great challenges, great adventures. Thanks,
Herb Bernstein, fellow student, pilot instructor.

Jim Supple, Loyola BSc (physics) 72
Ottawa

I have enough trouble remembering the meeting I had yesterday, but two things stand out. I
remember marching out in a thin line from the Admin Building, which we had occupied
overnight, past the black-suited Montreal riot police equipped with clear shields and helmets
with visors. No violence — I guess they were tipped we were science majors! Also, I was among
the first student reps elected to the Senate, and we made joint majors possible.

Paul Shubin, Loyola BA 73
Montreal

I remember:

- Winter Carnival, with the princesses from Marianopolis
- Meet the Profs nights
- the camaraderie of the old SAC building
- non-stop Hearts games in the Science Building lounge
- the teachers: Jesuits and lay staff; to this day, the best teachers I ever had.

Aline Gubbay, Sir George BFA 74, MFA 78
Westmount, Que.

Trying to dream up a subject for a major paper in the MFA course, I was lucky enough to draw Don Andrus as an advisor. He suggested an idea which proved so interesting and productive it lit up my year.

Then — how lucky can you get — I had Russell Harper as my thesis advisor. This gentle man, so knowledgeable yet so modest about his knowledge, was an inspiration to me, both as a teacher and as a human being.

Two wonderful teachers. I am so grateful for their influence, which has remained with me all these years.

Jose M. Perez, BCom 75, MSc 75
Miami, Fla.

Reflecting on earlier times of my Concordia student life will always be a vivid experience for me. The memories of the computer science professors relentlessly immersed in deep thoughts of algorithmic logic, always striving to excel in new ideas; and the heavy paperwork, the complex programming assignments, the intense lectures, will always be remembered with nostalgia.

Little did we know where all that knowledge would take us. Who could have predicted our destiny? And now, I can look at myself . . . and say, wow!

Shirley Simpson Verdone, BFA 75
Calgary

That Amazing First Year with Susanne in 1969

Susanne Swibold, my first year introductory art studio professor, was for me the most outstanding and influential professor in all my years at Concordia. Everything about her was arresting and memorable, from her personal style of sporting a salt-and-pepper-grey, pixie hairstyle and dangling earrings to her ankle socks and desert boots with knee length skirts.

And, most shocking to me of all during that first class, lighting up and smoking a pipe! Her light blue eyes would look at you with such focused intensity and interest it was disconcerting! Thankfully, her steady gaze was always accompanied by a reassuring twinkle in her eye and a seemingly perpetually bemused smile on her lips.

Learning and classes with Susanne was always an exciting adventure. She taught us much in the way of drawing and painting, challenging us, daring us and questioning our preconceived safe ideas about art. Anxious beads of sweat about an assignment would transform to excitement and exhilaration with the classroom work that followed. She once had us buy and bring in a four-foot by eight-foot masonite board, on which she asked us to paint whatever we wished. After many weeks working on this assignment, when our painting was done she then told us we had to cut it up whichever way we wanted and to reconstruct it into a three dimensional version of it! Any attachment we may have felt for our original painting had to be swiftly put aside in the challenge to make it into something equally exciting. Susanne taught us students to really *see*. I remember that first year as one of seeing the beauty in even the most mundane of everyday objects and scenery. My visual acuity was so intensely heightened that many things seemed to be imbued with an amazing beauty I had not noticed before and which almost made me ache in seeing it.

Susanne was an artist but equally gifted at teaching. Besides her knowledge and understanding of art, she also brought to class her great enthusiasm and love for it, and imparted that to us in a most exciting and refreshing manner. And Susanne, bless her heart, always found something complimentary to say on each of our drawings or paintings when she came around in class. These favourable comments might then be followed by comments or suggestions of how something in our compositions might not be working well, followed by a discussion of ways to make it more successful. It was always immensely easier for our young and sensitive egos to accept these constructive criticisms after she had the grace and sensitivity to find something redeeming, if even only a small part of our work, to compliment us on. (Small aside: this was in sharp contrast to another of my art professors in that same year, who will remain nameless, who seemed to delight in tearing us down with brutal criticisms of our finished projects.)

Susanne's instruction laid the foundation for all other art classes that followed in my years at university. While other professors taught me methods in various media and offered up constructive criticisms for my work, only Susanne can be credited with teaching me so much in

the fundamentals of artistic expression. This allowed me to artistically express myself in ways that up until that age of 18 I knew little about. I often wonder these many years later what I might have missed in learning had I not had Susanne as professor. Over the years I have often reflected on how much she taught me and how grateful I am for having the good fortune to have had her for my professor that first year.

Michael Forde, BCom 76
Toronto

Streaking Through Loyola

In keeping with the times, an individual streaked the Loyola campus in my first year in school. That day, my course schedule allowed me a small break between classes. I munched on a homemade sandwich from my brown paper bag in the midst of a large group of other students and maybe some professors as we waited for the promised event.

Almost to the second of the appointed time, a male wearing nothing but a scarf jumped out of a car on Sherbrooke, ran along the pathway in front of the Vanier Library, and jumped into a car by the northeastern car park. A record three-minute dash.

I was never interested in finding out the identity of "he who bared himself in public." Neither was I able to figure out whether his motive was to impress the ladies, entertain the men or to show contempt for the establishment.

What I do know, however, is that my streak through Loyola took much longer, and it had nothing to do with bodily nudity. In 1973 I arrived at the Sherbrooke St. West campus feeling intellectually naked. When I graduated almost four years later, I felt fully clothed. Outfitted with the attire required to make my way successfully through life.

As with any important endeavour, I could not have done it without lots of help. I was fortunate to have had excellent teachers, and the administrative support staff was extremely friendly and very kind. However, Professor Graeme Decarie and Father Malone stand out as luminaries on my path. Almost three decades later, what they have shared is still lighting my way through life.

I have only one regret about my Loyola/Concordia experience; it should have been longer. Yet a good streak is but for a moment.

Jan McConnell, BA 76
Chateauguay, Que.

As a so-called "older student," my return to education in 1974 was a big step for me. Five school-aged children added to my new schedule, so it was with some trepidation I entered my first Concordia class, Children's Literature, taught by Francelia Butler, visiting professor from U. Conn.

A perfect choice, I thought, for as she introduced herself, she said, "I went back to university, received my PhD and became a professor in spite of the many who tried to stop me with those three F-words: Female, Fat and Fifty. My course at U. Conn. was referred to as Kitty Lit. But, now with 300 upperclassmen per session, I think it has caught on."

It surely did with our class, and we never looked back as Francelia lectured through the facts behind Mother Goose, Winnie the Pooh, *The Little Prince*, *The Wizard of Oz*, etc. She and her famous guest speakers opened the doors behind the scenes of myth, poetry, folklore, native tradition, magic, cinema and television. The sharing of her own amazing life experiences brought many of us out of our own lives to find out we also had unique experiences to share. Relationships were formed between student and student and a bond between professor and class.

Francelia's gift of love to all children and the child in us all was her unselfish sharing of this love. Humour, kindness and inspiration made her classes some of the best. We look back on her own writings, *Skip Rope Rhymes Around the World*, *Anthologies*, *The Lucky Penny*, *Indira Gandhi*. These books introduced her and us to famous personalities; many, in fact, visited this class and the second class she gave. Some of her students (myself for one) became visitors and lecturers to her class at U. Conn. Her later push for "Peace Games" (cooperative games) for children developed by her students at U. Conn, a kind of forerunner to "conflict resolutions" for kids, became well known and supported by the governor of the state.

We felt fortunate to have known Francelia; for myself, I was blessed. Francelia Butler died in 1998, but her contribution will continue through her hundreds of students, some of whom still share the memory.

Sandra Barnes, BA (history) 77
Edmonton

In 1976, Professor Richard Wilbur of the Canadian Studies Department devised a course, entitled Western Canada Study Tour. Two months of classroom study were followed by a two-week trip across the Prairies. There were about a dozen students and two instructors, professors Wilbur and Bruce Bowden of the history department. We flew to Winnipeg and stayed at the University of Manitoba. After two or three days in Manitoba we rented vans and drove across the Prairies, staying in student residences in Saskatoon, Edmonton, Calgary, Lethbridge and Regina.

We walked where Riel and Dumont fought their battles and where Crowfoot and Big Bear signed their treaties. We crossed rivers which once bore the canoes and York boats of the Hudson's Bay Company. We visited ethnic communities, industrial sites, farms, ranches, grain elevators and the place where Alberta's dreams came true — Leduc No. 1. We stood where Henday stood and, like him, were astonished by the land.

The Western Canada Study Tour stamped Western Canada on my heart. In 1978 I had graduated from Concordia and McGill, but Bill 101 had severely restricted hiring in Quebec's English language school system. I decided to leave and go to Alberta, where things were booming. After 20 years, I have never looked back.

I am unable to remember all the names of many of my fellow travellers, but it would be fun to hear from Rodney Young and Claire Boulet and of course Dick and Bruce. I understand Dick Wilbur is living somewhere in New Brunswick now.

Looking back, I think I mostly remember driving across the flatland, past grain elevators, rich black earth and prairie towns like Yorkton, Moosonee, Russell and Dafoe. We were sometimes battered by dust and wind but we were always warmed by magnificent sunsets and new-found camaraderie. The sky was endless and nearly always blue. Thank you, Dick Wilbur, wherever you are.

Another memory: When I walked into Jack Ornstein's Philosophy 210 class in September 1974, he was telling everyone that each person who came into the room could take forever to arrive at their seat. His reasoning had something to do with the infinity of time. The theory threw me for a loop and I was to find out later that another student was equally confused. This student was Doris Rabinovitch, who was a part-timer on a leave of absence from her job as a Lifestyles editor of the *Montreal Star*. She wrote under her maiden name, Doris Giller.

We had a lot in common as we were both mature students from the business world studying a rather off-beat subject. We joked and consoled each other as we struggled with Plato's Theory of Forms, Aristotle's Golden Mean, etc. Doris was completely unpretentious and never hesitated to speak out and ask questions a lot of us were afraid to ask for the fear of sounding stupid.

The last time I saw Doris was over a coffee in the Hall Building cafeteria after our final exam in April 1975. We laughed because neither of us understood the questions but discovered to our delight that we both adopted the same answer strategy: whenever a question mentioned a philosopher, we simply wrote down everything we remembered about him. We had a good laugh over that.

In 1995 I heard a CBC radio interview with Jack Rabinovitch, the sponsor of the Giller Prize, awarded each year for the best work of Canadian fiction. I realized that he was talking about my old pal in Philosophy 210. I wrote to Mr. Rabinovitch, and he told me that Doris had passed away in 1992 of breast cancer and that he had established the Giller Prize in her memory.

Now each fall when the Giller Prize is awarded, I remember the tall student with the curly perm, faded jeans and black turtleneck who was my friend in Jack Ornstein's class.

I told Jack Rabinovitch that Doris had a unique quality: she was funny and wise at the same time. He told me that I had recognized her essence. Rest in peace, friend. You are someone I will always remember.

Kathleen (Cook) Bergman, BA 78
New Westminster, B.C.

The moments I remember most were the clashes between the pro-Khomeni and anti-Khomeni factions at the school.

At the time, I was going out with an Iranian student who greeted me with two black eyes one day, due to fighting at the University.

He invited me to go to sit in on a meeting. As I walked in and shuffled around a few students, I noticed all eyes were on me. I was extremely nervous and did not understand why everyone was staring at me. Being of the mind that the best defence is a strong offence, I yelled out, "What are you looking at, heh?" At which point my boyfriend tugged at my short waistcoat. There it was, in full view: "U.S. Army," "U.S. Air Force," and all types of U.S. government agency labels all over my jacket. This particular meeting, I later found out, was about the approach to be taken by the group toward the U.S. Needless to say, I shuffled out rather quickly!

Augusta Lokhorst, BA 78
Vancouver

This is not a memory of Concordia but rather a strange coincidence of life. It is the story of how I found a lost Concordia alumni member. This summer, while hiking on the West Coast Trail of Vancouver Island, I almost literally ran into the man who is now living with me as my partner. He was on holiday from Switzerland and by the end of his holiday had decided to return to B.C. to be with me. The coincidence is that we both went to Concordia at the same time, graduated the same year and, of course, never met there.

Carol Gambell, Loyola BSc (bio-physical ed. & athletic training) 79
Lafayetteville, N.Y.

I remember: being on the first women's soccer team; having athletic director Ed Enos take us to the Olympic pool for a swim (1976); the most fun ever at winter carnival; learning how to have to make the grades with our exercise physiology teacher (whose name I can't recall).

Angela (Powell) Huxham, BA 79, MBA 81
Vancouver

Because I was a young mother attending Concordia on a part-time basis, I don't have the kind of memories typically associated with college days.

My daughter, Heidi, was 3 months old in 1975 when I was accepted into the BA program at Concordia. For the first couple of years I attended night classes three times a week, which was a struggle. Things looked up, though, when I was able to enrol Heidi in the Concordia University Childcare Centre on Fort Street so I could attend day classes. I have happy memories of the two of us taking the bus in from the West Island and going to school together. My commute to Concordia often involved trudging through snowbanks by the side of the 2 and 20 laden with a 3-year-old and heavy bookbags. Heidi enjoyed the centre and can still remember the names of some of the other children that attended.

Heidi is now 25 and is attending the University of British Columbia. (I'm 45 and Director, Market Surveillance, at the Canadian Venture Exchange.) University daycare is probably commonplace now, but I believe that 25 years ago it was an example of Concordia's unique commitment to accessible education — and I'm forever grateful.

Jim Lacey, GrDip (comm. studs.) 80
Fort Pierce, Fla.

I took two film courses with Father Gervais as part of the diploma in communication studies in 1977-78. One course was the Italian Neo-Realists, which offered a remarkable series of wonderful films which I would never have known of but for this course. In the other, on a weekly basis we viewed and critiqued films, either seen in first-run theatres or at special in-house viewings, with guests like Bibi Andersson. This made viewings special and discussions interesting. Father Gervais used his skills to encourage us to develop our own.

Marie Payette-Falls, BA (honours theology) 80, MA (history & philosophy of religion) 83
West Vancouver

As I pass by my favourite romantic West Vancouver restaurant, I think back to that sunny Saturday in late October 1978, when a young girl of 21 left a noisy house filled with visiting relatives and made a trip to west Montreal that would ultimately change the course of her life.

She had to prepare for that theology exam, being in her second year of undergraduate studies, and too much was going on in her family home to even consider “hitting the books” there. She’d never been to the Vanier Library on a weekend, but its quiet atmosphere seemed like just the right setting to sit down and pore over her notes. He, on the other hand, was in his first year of graduate studies, having finished his BCom, honours economics, earlier that year. This trip to the library was also a first for him, and concentrating on the business at hand wasn’t exactly easy, what with the constant parade of young women making their way to the washrooms downstairs. Of course he had picked the perfect spot, just by the stairwell, where they could be seen coming and going and he could be admiring the view.

Her concentration was broken by the presence of a rather shy young man, peering down at her and handing her what seemed to be a brief missive. Setting it down on the study table, she opened it up under the watchful gaze of a faithful reproduction of Michelangelo’s David, only to find an invitation to lunch at the local McDonald’s. While not gourmet, this seemed like the ideal setting for a light and inexpensive meal with a stranger who had caught her fancy months ago at the Campus Centre but whom she’d dismissed, given his impending graduation and ensuing move on to bigger and better things. And so she sent the messenger back with her cautious response: that she would indeed meet the young and as-yet-unnamed gentleman, at an appointed time and place, despite knowing that she was romantically involved with someone else — for the time being.

It’s now 20 years later, May 10, 2000, to be exact, the 20th anniversary of her marriage to Philip Andrew Falls, class of 1978. She’s sitting at a table at Barollo, their favourite Italian eatery, once again under the watchful eye of David, though this statue is considerably smaller than the one that graced Loyola’s Vanier Library on that sunny day in 1978. Little do their two teenage daughters know that had a similar scene not been played out over 20 years ago, they would not

be there, in a comfortable, loving home, surrounded by fond memories and family mementoes collected over the years.

And so, two decades later, an unassuming waiter is now the messenger, handing him a card which he opens up to find three words: I Love You.

Happy Anniversary, Philip. May we live to see many more such days and nights.

Katharine Davidson Heney, BA (library studies) 81
Nepean, Ont.

I remember: David in the Vanier Library . . . and what some guys were trying to dangle on him one night!

David Hardy, BA 82
Dollard des Ormeaux, Que.

I graduated from Concordia in 1982 with a BA, honours psychology. To the point: they were the best years of my life. Professors stimulated me to think creatively because they were accessible and class sizes were small. I feel much more enriched because of my university years. I'm glad I went to Concordia rather than McGill because of the class sizes, accessible professors and the beauty of the Loyola Campus. The greenery and the small size of Loyola made me feel comfortable, and because it stimulated socialization it was much easier to meet people.

The beer bashes, parties, games room, lounges for relaxation, all made going to Concordia fun. Also, doing something I enjoyed made me work hard. Working in the library until 10:00 p.m. was very enjoyable.

Thanks for the memories.

Sebastian Saba, DDS, BSc 85

Certified Specialist in Prosthetic Dentistry; Faculty Lecturer, McGill University; Associate Editor, *The Journal of The Canadian Dental Association*
Montreal

As a graduate of the first class of the Institute for Co-Operative Education, my fondest memories are of a special physical chemistry professor, Dr. Ron Westbury. It was our first summer semester in school and the summer was a long and hot one.

The idea of going to school in the summer to learn chemistry was not too exciting for any of the students, but Dr. Westbury had a special knack for making the classes exciting and entertaining. He loved teaching chemistry and his enthusiasm was contagious. He would begin the lecture with a Trivial Pursuit card (the green science category, of course) and by mid-lecture he would stop and for a solid 5 to 10 minutes focus on the Trivial Pursuit game, stating, "Okay class, from the sublime to the ridiculous," and return to the core lecture.

At the end of the lecture he would make sure to look up the answers and tell the class. His approach made it exciting to go to class and enjoy every minute. When Dr. Westbury was ill he would ask his wife, Dr. Catherine Westbury (a chemistry professor from Marianopolis College), to substitute, and she was just as exciting and interesting to listen to. I have had the opportunity to experience both of these wonderful teachers (having graduated from Marianopolis College also), and have realized that quality education is not just course content but the special person who knows how to deliver that information in an exciting way. The Westburys have taught me that education can be fun and challenging, and they have made a significant contribution to Concordia's chemistry department.

Kevin Driscoll, BA (journalism) 89
Prince George, B.C.

My best memory from Concordia has to be the underwear party held on the third floor of the Hingston Hall residence in the winter of 1987 (or was it 1988?) that I helped organize with Dave Kidd, Ken Chan and Greg MacFarlane. One rez room was emptied of all its belongings, other than the dresser (bar). Helping security clear the hall of bodies the next

morning will be with me forever. The snowbank BBQs in January, Rez Baronov's hockey and CIRL also are times well remembered.

Carolyn Gammon, MA 89
Berlin, Germany

Hey gals! Remember the Lesbian Studies Coalition of Concordia (LSCC) that met regularly from 1987-92 in the basement lounge of the Simone de Beauvoir Institute, only to discover this very room had been the underground lesbian bar in the '70s, Madame Arthur's?

Remember first putting those two words together — Lesbian Studies — and believing it could happen? Remember that first tentative meeting in September 1987 when even three professors came and *The Link* sent a guy to report on this women-only meeting? (He reported!) Remember the minuscule budget we had to work with but still we invited such great speakers, such as author of *Desert of the Heart*, Jane Rule; Afro-German historian Katharina Oguntoye; black American poet and dean at Rutgers, Cheryl Clarke; First Nations authors Chrystos, Beth Brant and Two Feathers; and many more?

Remember challenging the University to hold Lesbian Studies courses? Providing departments with professors, syllabi and bibliographies, only to be told time and again, no, it doesn't fit "the canon"? Remember that incredible thrill when all our work came to fruition and the first accredited openly Lesbian Studies course in Canada was held at Concordia in the spring of 1990?

And gals, remember too that all along we carried on our own extracurricular program with such titles as "Coming Out Stories — Tell Your Own," or "Unlearning Anti-Semitism" or "Madonna, Dildos and Dykes"? Remember looking within and challenging ourselves to be conscious about racism and anti-Semitism, organizing workshops, feeling afraid to take on this difficult but necessary work? Remember getting saucier as the years went by and, thinking of the academy's worst nightmare of us, we conceived the slogan and button, "Clit-licking in the Classroom" and then we wore these buttons to the Learned's? Remember how wild, innovative and courageous we all thought we were? Well . . . we were!

Tracey Reynolds, BA (English literature) 91
Calgary

The group I met working at Reggie's (downtown) and the Oasis Pub (Loyola) have proven to be lifelong friends. Nine years after graduation, I am still in close contact with most of them, attending their weddings and enjoying seeing their children grow up. Now that I am living in Calgary, we keep in touch by e-mail and continue to share life's experiences — not just reliving the past. The memories are too numerous to mention, but they'll always be close to my heart!

Rhona Samsonovitch, AHSC, Cert 95, BA (English) 99
Montreal West

In May of 1991, I returned to university life and entered the Certificate in Family Life Education

Program. Classes were a melding of various ages, backgrounds and interests. What I remember most poignantly is the camaraderie among us "older" students. We came back to school for basically the same reason — to grow, experience, broaden our bases, maybe even find a new career! Today I have the pleasure of keeping in close contact with three of those wonderful ladies. We have remained confidantes and supportive friends, and I cherish the relationships that we share.

Parissa Zohari, BA (honours linguistics) 95
Montreal

The most interesting memory I have of my years of undergraduate studies at Concordia is what happened when I went to hand in my very last assignment before graduation in 1995. I remember walking to the Department of Modern Languages and Linguistics in the CH building at Loyola. I handed my final paper to my professor, also the chair of the department at the time. She was sitting with the departmental secretary, when the following conversation took place between us:

Me: Now that I'm done, could you give me any suggestions as to where I should look for jobs?

Chair: You need a job!?

Me: Yes! Why? Do you have a job?

Chair (hesitant): How many years of . . . ? Do you have any office experience at all?

Me: Yes! About five years.

Chair: Five years!

The next thing I knew, I was being interviewed for the position of the departmental receptionist. Nowadays, if you ever pass by our department, do come in and visit me. I still work for the same department but a lot has changed since then. We are now called the Department of Classics, Modern Languages and Linguistics. The CH building was abandoned and we are presently in the Hall Building. And I am currently the undergraduate/graduate secretary in charge of academic advising.

Valerie Brideau, BFA (fibres) 98
Miramichi, N.B.

My favourite memories are about the Aesthetic Seminar taught by Elise Bernatchez, PhD. Challenging, intelligent, humorous, Dr. Bernatchez rekindled my love of learning.

Presently I am at St. Mary's University in Halifax, in the Atlantic Canada Studies graduate program, focusing upon the historiography of dogs in Atlantic Canada. I intend to pursue a PhD dealing with canine studies. I attribute my academic success to the love Dr. Bernatchez instills in her students of learning, understanding and challenging oneself.
